

Decorating System For Edible Products

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

5 This is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 10/058,629 entitled "Decorating System for Edible Items" filed on January 28, 2002 by Spurgeon et al., which is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 09/144,046 filed on August 31, 1998, now abandoned, which claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/079,335 filed on March 25, 1998. This application also claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. _____, entitled "Decorating System for Edible Items," filed on March 19, 2004 by Schnoebelen et. al, the entirety of which is incorporated herein by reference.

6-21-07

TECHNICAL FIELD

10 This invention relates to the field of digital imaging on edible items.

BACKGROUND

15 Decorative food products, such as cakes, are popular items, particularly for special occasions, such as birthdays, holidays, weddings, anniversaries and other celebratory events. These items are typically purchased from bakeries, since they require some skill and/or apparatus to create. Previously, these items were created from colored frostings applied manually by trained bakery chefs. The creation of these hand-decorated items were time and labor intensive. Normally a customer will either buy a stock item from the bakery or else place an order for a special item then return to pick the order up at a later date. These manually created items are at best a stylized rendition of the desired image and limited by the skill of the baker.

20 There have been a number of attempts previously to provide alternatives to the manually created decorating process. One such alternative that is presently widely used is the use of pre-made decorative items which are then placed on the food product. These pre-made items are produced in bulk and inventoried until use. The use of such pre-made decorative items precludes uniquely decorated and/or personalized decorations. Also, these pre-made decorative items must be either ordered, which requires a long lead time, or stored in inventory at the risk of under ordering or over ordering, as well as the cost of